

OUR FIRST 12 MONTHS
**OUR TOP 25
 ACHIEVEMENTS**
 DELIVERING FOR RURAL
 AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA



The Coalition came to government last September with a **new focus on regional Australia**.

Australia faced a \$47 billion deficit for the 2013-14 financial year alone and \$123 billion of accumulated Labor deficits to 2016-17.

Expenditure reductions are not the whole answer. We must also invest in things that make our country strong and will drive economic growth. That's where the regions are so important.

Our new **\$1 billion National Stronger Regions Fund** will be up and running next year. Organisations, including councils and community groups, will be able to apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million for community infrastructure.

We are also investing heavily in the essential transport infrastructure needs of regional communities. Our **\$50 billion investment in transport infrastructure** is the largest by any Australian Government.

The **abolition of the carbon tax** will save local families hundreds of dollars a year, local businesses thousands of dollars a year and local communities millions of dollars every year.

This Government did not create the economic problems besetting our country, but we were elected to fix them. Fundamental to that repair job is backing Australia's regional businesses and communities for growth. The Nationals hold our **commitment to regional Australia at our core**.

The Government's **Building Stronger Regional Communities commitment** includes a range of programmes and initiatives to build stronger regional economies and communities. These include:

- > Over \$2.34 billion in **water infrastructure upgrades** for the Murray-Darling Basin, working to restore one of our greatest natural resources to full health whilst supporting economic development.
- > \$50 million for the **20 Million Trees Programme** that will provide job opportunities for Australians while also providing solutions to local conservation needs.
- > \$18.2 million under the **Regional Aviation Access Programme** for infrastructure upgrades to remote airstrips across Australia.
- > \$320 million for a comprehensive **drought support package** that will support farm businesses, families and communities that are experiencing hardship and help them recover when the current drought ends.

New Free Trade Agreements with Japan, South Korea and, ultimately, China, mean better deals for our exports.

The Nationals are focused on a strategic plan for growth in regional areas. These strategies will be based on **sound, evidence-based policies** informed by a broad suite of White Papers.

The Nationals, as a key part of this government, recognise the vital role regional areas can, and must, play in overcoming Australia's national challenges and driving economic development.

Through our policies and investment programmes, the Australian Government is **building stronger regional communities**.



Hon **Warren Truss** MP
 Deputy Prime Minister
 Leader of The Nationals
 Minister for Infrastructure
 and Regional Development

The Coalition promised to stop the boats, abolish the carbon tax, to get the Budget under control, and to build the roads of the 21st century



The Nationals in Coalition will build on these commitments by delivering:

- > A stronger regional Australia
- > Stronger regional communities
- > More opportunities and greater prosperity for regional Australia
- > A fairer share of funding for regional Australia
- > More investment and jobs for regional Australia
- > Better infrastructure for regional Australia
- > Strong, sustainable economic development for the regions

OUR FIRST 12 MONTHS OUR TOP 25 ACHIEVEMENTS

DELIVERING FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA



- 1** Abolished the **carbon tax**, saving the average Australian family around \$550 per year and up to 10 per cent on the cost of electricity for small business.
- 2** Legislation has passed in the House to **abolish the mining tax**. Abolishing the mining tax will help the resources sector invest with confidence and certainty.
- 3** Signed **Free Trade Agreements** with Korea and Japan, with progress towards another with China.
- 4** **Unlocked the log jam of Commonwealth environment laws** and granted approval to more than \$800 billion worth of projects.
- 5** A new comprehensive \$320 million **drought support package** to provide greater government assistance sooner to our nation's drought-affected farmers.
- 6** **Re-commenced the live export** of sheep, cattle and goats to Bahrain, Iran and Egypt, while re-building the live cattle trade with Indonesia.
- 7** Budget provides \$1 billion over five years for a new **National Stronger Regions Fund**, with the first funding to be made available next year to provide the infrastructure communities need for their people, families and businesses.
- 8** \$2.5 billion for the **Roads to Recovery Programme** over six years, including a double payment to Councils in 2015-16.
- 9** \$565 million to repair **black spots on roads**, including an extra \$100 million in 2015-16 and 2016-17.
- 10** \$300 million over the next five years through our new **Bridges Renewal Programme** to cover up to 50 per cent of repair and replacement costs for bridges across the nation.
- 11** \$200 million for **heavy vehicle safety projects** to cover up to 50 per cent of the cost of projects that increase productivity for heavy vehicles and improve the safety environment for heavy vehicle drivers.
- 12** \$100 million for a **Mobile Phone Black Spot Programme** that will improve mobile coverage along major transport routes, in small communities and in locations prone to experiencing natural disasters.
- 13** The 2014 Budget contained \$100 million for **rural research and development**, \$15 million to support **market access**, \$20 million extra for **biosecurity**, and \$8 million to **increase access to safe effective chemicals** for farmers.
- 14** **Labor's re-registration process** for farm chemicals has been abolished, slashing farmers' costs by up to \$9 million per year.
- 15** **\$20.5 billion of rural goods were exported** in the first six months of this year – 10.8 per cent higher than the same period last year.
- 16** The **Road User Charge** for heavy vehicles has been frozen for 2014-15 and the government has retained the **Diesel Fuel Rebate Scheme**.
- 17** The Government's promised **White Paper on Northern Australia** is underway. It is being developed with the Queensland, Western Australia and Northern Territory Governments and will detail how Northern Australia can achieve its potential as a food bowl for Asia and a major energy exporter, as well as growing the tourism, education and health sectors.
- 18** **Over 10,000 unnecessary and counter-productive pieces of legislation and regulations** have been repealed. Changes already announced by the government will **reduce annual red tape** across the economy by \$700 million. The Government will designate two Parliamentary sitting days as repeal days each year.
- 19** The **NBN project is getting back on track** with more than twice as many people using the NBN as on election day in September 2013.
- 20** Funded in the 2014 Budget the **largest infrastructure investment in Commonwealth history**. Major projects include:
 - \$6.7 billion to upgrade the Bruce Highway;
 - \$5.6 billion to finish the duplication of the Pacific Highway;
 - Up to \$1.285 billion for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing;
 - \$675.9 million to finish the Gateway WA Project in Perth;
 - \$615 million to build the Swan Valley Bypass on the Perth to Darwin Highway;
 - \$508 million to upgrade the Warrego Highway;
 - \$400 million to continue the Midland Highway upgrade in Tasmania;
 - \$307.8 million for the Great Northern Highway (Muecha to Wubin); and
 - \$174 million for the North West Coastal Highway (Minilya to Barradale)
- 21** Completed agreements which bring all State jurisdictions together to implement the historic **Murray-Darling Basin Plan** for water reform.
- 22** Signed agreements with all States and Territories for **one stop shop arrangements for environmental assessments and approvals**.
- 23** Budgeted for a \$40 million **Reef Trust** which will be used to support the improvement of coastal habitat, water quality and enhanced species protection along the Great Barrier Reef.
- 24** The government has begun to deliver hundreds of local projects around the country under our \$314 million **Community Development Programme**.
- 25** Provided \$100 million for **Exploration Development Incentives**, which will support exploration for new mineral deposits. The Exploration Development Incentive will provide small exploration companies with better access to capital from private sector investors via a refundable tax offset for greenfields exploration costs.